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UNCLAS HARARE 000718

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR AF/S
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JFRAZER
USDOC FOR AMANDA HILLIGAS
PASS USTR FLORIZELLE LISER
STATE PASS USAID FOR MARJORIE COPSON
USDOL FOR ROBERT YOUNG

E. O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ELAB](#) [PHUM](#) [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [EINV](#) [PGOV](#) [ZI](#) [ZCTU](#)

SUBJECT: Laboring for Worker's Rights

1. (SBU) Summary: Leaders of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) informed EconOff that stayaways and demonstrations remain their primary campaign weapon. Meanwhile, ruling party supporters continue to harass labor leaders in attempts to disrupt May Day festivities. End summary.

2. (SBU) As the main voice for the Zimbabwe labor movement (claiming 300,000 members), the ZCTU views stayaways and demonstrations as the primary means of advocacy. Leaders plan to celebrate May Day in 21 different locations in Zimbabwe-highlighting the freedoms of assembly and press. Zanu-PF supporters have recently assaulted May Day festivities organizers, beating one person severely. Zanu-PF activists later released all victims.

3. (SBU) Despite election laws prohibiting unauthorized voter education, ZCTU plans to continue with a voter education campaign for the upcoming 2005 parliamentary elections.

4. (U) The AFL-CIO plans to award ZCTU Secretary General Wellington Chibebe with the George Meany Award in a Washington DC ceremony sometime in July. This will hopefully focus international attention to the GOZ's continuous repression of organized labor.

5. (SBU) Comment: Although committed to advancing workers' rights and democracy, the ZCTU leadership appears to have run out of ideas. The stayaways and demonstrations have not worked, yet this continues as the main thrust of their campaign. Perhaps the voter education drive will kick-off a new period of activism.

Sullivan